

PATENT COOPERATION TREATY

PCT

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

(PCT Article 36 and Rule 70)

Applicant's or agent's file reference UNIPEG/DD	FOR FURTHER ACTION	See Notification of Transmittal of International Preliminary Examination Report (Form PCT/IPEA/416).
International Application No. PCT/AU2003/001135	International Filing Date (day/month/year) 4 September 2003	Priority Date (day/month/year) 4 September 2002
International Patent Classification (IPC) or national classification and IPC Int. Cl. 7 D06F 55/02; F16B 2/10		
Applicant UNIPEG INTERNATIONAL PTY LTD et al		

1. This international preliminary examination report has been prepared by this International Preliminary Examining Authority and is transmitted to the applicant according to Article 36.
2. This REPORT consists of a total of 3 sheets, including this cover sheet.

This report is also accompanied by ANNEXES, i.e., sheets of the description, claims and/or drawings which have been amended and are the basis for this report and/or sheets containing rectifications made before this Authority (see Rule 70.16 and Section 607 of the Administrative Instructions under the PCT).

These annexes consist of a total of 2 sheet(s).

3. This report contains indications relating to the following items:

- I Basis of the report
- II Priority
- III Non-establishment of opinion with regard to novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability
- IV Lack of unity of invention
- V Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement
- VI Certain documents cited
- VII Certain defects in the international application
- VIII Certain observations on the international application

Date of submission of the demand 5 July 2004	Date of completion of the report 19 July 2004
Name and mailing address of the IPEA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized Officer D.R. LUM Telephone No. (02) 6283 2544

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU2003/001135

I. Basis of the report

1. With regard to the elements of the international application:*

- the international application as originally filed.
- the description, pages 1-11, as originally filed,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages , received on with the letter of
- the claims, pages 14 , as originally filed,
pages , as amended (together with any statement) under Article 19,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages 12 - 13, received on 5 July 2004 with the letter of 5 July 2004
- the drawings, pages 1/4 - 4/4, as originally filed,
pages , filed with the demand,
pages , received on with the letter of
- the sequence listing part of the description:
pages , as originally filed
pages , filed with the demand
pages , received on with the letter of

2. With regard to the language, all the elements marked above were available or furnished to this Authority in the language in which the international application was filed, unless otherwise indicated under this item.

These elements were available or furnished to this Authority in the following language which is:

- the language of a translation furnished for the purposes of international search (under Rule 23.1(b)).
- the language of publication of the international application (under Rule 48.3(b)).
- the language of the translation furnished for the purposes of international preliminary examination (under Rules 55.2 and/or 55.3).

3. With regard to any nucleotide and/or amino acid sequence disclosed in the international application, the international preliminary examination was carried out on the basis of the sequence listing:

- contained in the international application in written form.
- filed together with the international application in computer readable form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in written form.
- furnished subsequently to this Authority in computer readable form.
- The statement that the subsequently furnished written sequence listing does not go beyond the disclosure in the international application as filed has been furnished.
- The statement that the information recorded in computer readable form is identical to the written sequence listing has been furnished

4. The amendments have resulted in the cancellation of:

- the description, pages
- the claims, Nos.
- the drawings, sheets/fig.

5. This report has been established as if (some of) the amendments had not been made, since they have been considered to go beyond the disclosure as filed, as indicated in the Supplemental Box (Rule 70.2(c)).**

* Replacement sheets which have been furnished to the receiving Office in response to an invitation under Article 14 are referred to in this report as "originally filed" and are not annexed to this report since they do not contain amendments (Rules 70.16 and 70.17).

** Any replacement sheet containing such amendments must be referred to under item 1 and annexed to this report

INTERNATIONAL PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU2003/001135

V. Reasoned statement under Article 35(2) with regard to novelty, inventive step or industrial applicability; citations and explanations supporting such statement**1. Statement**

Novelty (N)	Claims 1-19	YES
	Claims	NO
Inventive step (IS)	Claims 1-19	YES
	Claims	NO
Industrial applicability (IA)	Claims 1-19	YES
	Claims	NO

2. Citations and explanations (Rule 70.7)

Claims 1-19 meet the criteria set forth in PCT Article 33(2) - (4) for novelty, inventive step and industrial applicability. The prior art published before the priority date does not disclose an integrally formed clamp which includes a flexible joint urging the opposed pair of elongate members into a clamping position when the clamp is in a passive state and including a locking device which has a first end hinged to the first handle portion and movable to a second position which locks the clamp in a clamping position.

The closest art is WO 1999/006626 which discloses an integrally moulded holding device with an intermediate joining piece, but item 24 does not lock the elongate portions in a clamping position. Item 24 permits movement between the members 10 and 11 as it is disclosed as a "living hinge".

CLAIMS

1. An integrally formed clamp including:
 - an opposed pair of first and second elongate substantially rigid members, the first elongate member having a first handle portion and a first clamping portions and the second 5 elongate member having a second handle portion and a second clamping portion;
 - a flexible joint intermediate the lengths of the first and second elongate members configured to urge the first and second clamping portions into abutment; and
 - a locking device,
 - wherein the locking device has a first end hinged to the first handle portion and 10 rotatable about the hinge and a second free end adapted to releasably cooperate with the second handle portion whereby to lock the first and second handle portions in spaced relationship and the first and second clamping portions in abutting relationship.
2. A clamp according to claim 1 for keeping members of a pair of garments together during laundry processing, wherein:
 - 15 in the passive state the first and second clamping portions are urged into abutment and the first and second handle portions are held in spaced relationship by the flexible joint; upon compression of the first and second handle portions, the first and second clamping portions are forced apart such that the first and second clamping portions are adapted to receive the pair of garments and to clamp together the garments when the first 20 and second handle portions are released; and
 - the abutting clamping portions secure the garments against dislodgment from the clamp during processing.
3. A clamp according to claim 1 or 2, wherein a hook or clip for engaging with a clothes line or rod is provided on either or both of the first and second handle portions.

REF ID: APT34AMDT

4. A clamp according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the locking device includes a guide to guide the second handle portion into cooperative engagement with the locking member.
5. A clamp according to claim 4, wherein the guide is a ramp or cam surface.
- 5 6. A clamp according to claim 4 or 5, wherein the second arm includes an inclined surface tapering from the guide towards the hinge and the first arm includes a complementary support surface on which the inclined surface rests when the locking device is engaged to the second handle portion.
7. A clamp according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the locking device 10 includes a shoulder and adjacent recess, and a protrusion of the second handle portion is adapted to ride over the shoulder and lockably rest in the recess, the protrusion held in the recess by the flexing force of the first and second arms.
8. A clamp according to any one of claims 1 to 6, wherein the second handle portion includes a shoulder and adjacent recess, and a protrusion of the locking device is adapted 15 to ride over the shoulder and lockably rest in the recess, the protrusion held in the recess by the flexing, compressive force of the first and second arms.
9. A clamp according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the second handle portion includes a guiding, longitudinally aligned slot configured to cooperate with a knob extending proud from the locking device.
- 20 10. A clamp according to any one of claims 1 to 8, wherein the locking device includes a longitudinally aligned slot configured to cooperate with a guiding knob extending proud from the second handle portion.
11. A clamp according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein the terminal end of the second handle portion includes a platform oriented transverse to the longitudinal axis

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.
PCT/AU03/01135

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER

Int. Cl. 7: D06F 55/02; F16B 2/10

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)
DWPI: IPC: D06F 55/-, F16B 2/10, H01R 11/24, A44B 21/00 & keywords: integral+, +unit+, +piece

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	GB 2177593 A (BRENDAN JON LINDSAY) 28 January 1987 Whole document	1-19
X	GB 2259108 (PENDY PLASTIC PRODUCTS LIMITED) 03 March 1993 Page 7 line 11 - page 8 line 17 & figure 5	1-19
X	GB 2333798 A (LESLIE MAIDMENT) 4 August 1999 Whole document	1-7, 10, 13-19

 Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C See patent family annex

* Special categories of cited documents:	
"A"	document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
"E"	earlier application or patent but published on or after the international filing date
"L"	document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
"O"	document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
"P"	document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed
"T"	later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention
"X"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone
"Y"	document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art
"&"	document member of the same patent family

Date of the actual completion of the international search 11 December 2003	Date of mailing of the international search report 17 DEC 2003
Name and mailing address of the ISA/AU AUSTRALIAN PATENT OFFICE PO BOX 200, WODEN ACT 2606, AUSTRALIA E-mail address: pct@ipaaustralia.gov.au Facsimile No. (02) 6285 3929	Authorized officer D.R. LUM Telephone No : (02) 6283 2544

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/AU03/01135

C (Continuation). DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	WO 99/06626 A (LANGFORD) 11 February 1999 Whole document	1-6, 13-19

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International application No.

PCT/AU03/01135

This Annex lists the known "A" publication level patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report. The Australian Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent Document Cited in Search Report		Patent Family Member					
WO	9906626	AU	69290/98	BR	9815561	EP	1000191
		GB	2327975	US	6397439		
GB	233798		NONE				
GB	2259108		NONE				
GB	2177593	AU	60061/86	NZ	212736	US	4706347
END OF ANNEX							